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USDA CELEBRATES EARTH DAY IN A BIG WAY AT HOLLY BEACH Over \$20 Million in Funding Announced for Louisiana Communities

HOLLY BEACH, LA, April 22, 2004 – People from communities all over Louisiana gathered today on Holly Beach in Cameron Parish, Louisiana, to celebrate Earth Day. During today's events, volunteers participated in a beach clean-up and conservation plantings, and U.S. Department of Agriculture officials announced over \$20 million in funding for nine water and waste projects in Louisiana.

"USDA Rural Development recognizes Earth Day by awarding funding to rural water and waste community infrastructure projects," said Michael B. Taylor, State Director for USDA Rural Development in Louisiana. "This year, USDA Rural Development is funding nine Earth Day projects in Louisiana."

Communities in Louisiana receiving USDA Rural Development funding for Earth Day projects are:

Community	Loan	Grant	Project
Town of Woodworth	\$1,549,000	\$668,000	Expand existing community sewage system to serve an additional 177 families.
Parish of West Baton Rouge	\$765,000	\$385,000	Construct community sewage facility for 1,100 residents in the Erwinville area of West Baton Rouge Parish.
City of Tallulah	\$3,160,000	\$2,454,000	Install 60,000 linear feet of sewer main, 250 manholes, and 14 lifts stations for the City of Tallulah.
City of St. Gabriel	\$444,000	\$331,000	Expand existing sewage system to serve an additional 20 families and a new community center.
Town of Oberlin	\$280,000	\$726,700	Upgrade an aging wastewater treatment system.
Greater Ward One Waterworks District-Lincoln Parish	\$1,102,000		Construct new 300,000-gallon elevated water tank and 4.6 miles of water lines to better serve 4,090 residents.
East Feliciana Rural Water System, Inc.	\$2,000,000		Make essential repairs to an aged water system serving 9,975 residents.
Cameron Parish Sewer District No. 10	\$2,218,000	\$1,683,000	Develop a public sewer system to serve over 1,168 residents of Holly Beach.
Ajax-Beulah Water System, Inc.	\$750,000	\$2,000,000	Extend a public water system to serve an additional 1,000 residents.

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Earth Day at Holly Beach was hosted by USDA Rural Development, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, and the Cameron Parish Police Jury.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Earth Team volunteers lined the beach with shovels in hand to plant new vegetation which will help trap sand and form new dunes on Holly Beach. Other volunteers planted woody species to provide food and shelter for migrating neotropical birds. While still other volunteers walked the beach picking up trash as part of the nationwide Great American Clean-Up sponsored by Keep America Beautiful and Keep Louisiana Beautiful.

“Cameron Parish is a great place to live and work—and it just keeps getting better—beautiful beaches, abundant wildlife—and now, because of the new sewage system for Holly Beach—an improved quality of life for residents and opportunities for economic growth and development,” said Tina Horn, Administrator for the Cameron Parish Police Jury.

USDA Rural Development provides a full range of rural development credit services in rural Louisiana. Further information on USDA Rural Development’s loan and grant programs can be obtained by visiting Rural Development’s web site at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/la/>.

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